

# DWIGHT'S Journal of Music.

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[Translated for this Journal.]

### Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

BY A. OULIBICHEFF.

(Continued from last week.)

#### THE FIRST FINALE.

We have now reached the Finale of the first act, which is at once a master-piece of the musician and the poet. In this Finale, which will stand forever as a model, the action is conducted with an art, of which the most perfect dramatic author would not be ashamed. The situations develop naturally from one another; the serious mingles with the lovely, the comic with the tragic, without any confusion or constraint. Every one speaks in his own language and acts as he must;

the persons gather and group themselves, not only for the public's sake, which is there to hear them sing, but for the sake of their own affairs, which compel them to sing to the best of their abilities; and finally, in the midst of all this, a wonderful *crescendo* of excitement, a succession of more and more animated, interesting and perfect images, which require the entire resources of the musician, and in a manner the surpassing of himself, and which at the conclusion, as if upon the topmost round of the ladder, exhibit the maximum of all attainable effect.

This splendid and progressive development obliged the two creators of the Finale to begin it, like the scale, with the lowest tone. At the outset it is nothing but a quarrel newly broken out between the bridal couple, a conjugal duet, in which Masetto develops a lyric character quite in harmony with his part. Mozart certainly had heard how peasants, when they are angry, talk to their horses or their wives, and how the wives, whether peasants or not, reply to their husbands, when they know not what to say. A duet full of originality and roguishness. This time the actual head of the house is obliged to subordinate his will to that of the nominal head. Don Juan appears, and with him the feast opens in brilliant chords. *Su corraggio o buona gente*. Entertain yourselves, good people, eat, drink, dance as much as you like. And the good people think they cannot bow too low, or scream too loud, in pure gratitude for such large invitation. A half commanding, half gracious wink urges them to enter the house. The crowd trip off one by one, the chorus loses itself in the distance, and there is left sounding only a C, in short strokes marked by the second violins, as Tonic in the last measure of the chorus, and Dominant to the following measure; which C introduces another duet, a little different from the first. Andante in F major, 3-4. Giovanni, left alone with Zerlina, finds against his voice and his expression of *La ci darem*. Zerlina may sing: *Ah! lasciate mi andar via*; (Ah! let me go;) her tones betray her; her heart still beats very tenderly at the sight of the amiable cavalier. But suddenly a modulation breaks the charm, striking the ear like an unpleasant false note. Masetto! *Si! Masetto!* replies the inopportune appearing person. Come then, unmanly fellow: *La poverina non può più star senza di te* (The poor girl cannot stay without you). This good-natured address of Giovanni's closes

with a cadence in trills of the most comic seriousness, which Masetto gives him back note for note: *Capisco, si Signore* (I understand, yes, Signor.) One can conceive of nothing more exquisitely comic.

At this moment sounds the ball music (Allegretto, 2-4,) from within the house, whose façade is more and more illuminated, as the darkness deepens on the stage. Joyful noise and *crescendo* in the orchestra. The bridal couple join their plebeian companions and leave the field to good society. Anna, Elvira and Ottavio appear in masks and black dominos. The minor key, which announces them, shows that these persons do not come to the feast to dance. How instantly you recognize the daughter of the Commander in the first words which she throws into this musical conversation: *Il passo è periglioso* (The step is dangerous). Always great and pathetic! The sound of the ball breaks in anew upon the audience; the famous Minuet is played, from which at once originates an exquisite conversation, comic on the one side (Giovanni and Leporello, who show themselves at the window), and serious on the other (the maskers in the street). The latter are invited to the feast, and they accept.

#### THE TRIO IN MASKS.

But ere they set foot on the threshold of ruin, which innocence never crosses with impunity, the maskers call on heaven to protect and strengthen them. (Adagio in B flat major, 4-4), during which the quartet (of strings) is wholly silent. Borne up on the accords of the wind instruments, the voices mount and gleam in this ethereal harmony. The outpourings of these three souls, whom the same vow has brought together, different as they are in their primitive material, are here blended in prayer, without merging the three individualities. Elvira soars to an exalted pitch; but Anna alone is competent to sustain herself in those high regions of ecstasy, in which her soul is as it were at home. She it is, who leads the invocation with a full trust in the justice of God; she is the radiant focus of the group. Ottavio's part, the least prominent among the three, is so constructed that it only lends the most advantageous relief to the other two. No master ever understood like Mozart the mystery of the combination of periods and the interweaving of parts of various design; an art, which eminently produces the inexpressible effect of the Trio of Maskers, the luminous undulation, ebb and flow

of melody, exhibited in this picture of the musician, as if it were actually painted in the air by a three-fold morning red. The accompaniment, set in extended chords, has no other figure but the *arpeggios* of the clarinet, in the low tones of the instrument, which here and there coincide with the course of the song. In the *ritornel* we hear the conclusion of the invocation in the orchestra, passing from mouth to mouth, and constantly ascending, as if invisible powers were hovering in the air, to bear these outpourings of the heart up to the throne of the Most High.

This scene is a new advance in the ideal action, which lurks behind the material action of the drama, a second announcement of the wonders which are to be fulfilled.

#### THE BALL SCENE.

The scene changes; we are in the house of Don Juan, in the midst of the feast. Before we note what is going on there, it will be well to cast a look at the localities and say a few words about the scenic arrangement, which is here of the greatest importance. In many theatres the arrangement is precisely what it should not be, and directly contrary to the intention of Mozart, so that the most original effects of the ball scene, both for eye and ear, are lost. Mozart has indicated three dance orchestras upon the stage, whereas frequently you find none, or have it all united in the dramatic orchestra, that is to say completely jumbled together. Mozart has three dances executed at once: a minuet, a contra-dance and a waltz; which naturally presupposes three halls opening into one another, for it would be very difficult to dance to 3-4, 2-4, and 3-8 time in the same room. Both musicians and dancers would lose the time. To avoid this dilemma, on stages representing only one room, it has been customary to have the minuet alone danced, but without cancelling the contra-dance and the waltz in the orchestra, whence has arisen a confusion which there was nothing to explain to the audience. At the most, only one or two violins have taken up each of these dances, without the special basses, which the composer has assigned them; and so it has happened that not a distinguishable phrase of these instruments, which were lost in the mass of the orchestra, has reached the ear. They have only served to spoil the minuet. We believe, that for the melodic and rhythmical understanding of a combination so wonderful, and so natural to the tumultuous orgy, which has reached its height, the numerical forces of the second and third orchestras ought to consist of half the musicians who play in the principal orchestra; say four violins and a contra-basso to each, supposing there are twenty instruments engaged on the minuet. Let us now follow our imaginary representation of the opera, which the falling of the curtain, after the Trio, had interrupted for a moment, to spare us the awkwardness of witnessing the preparations.

A splendidly decorated and lighted hall opens in the back ground upon two other halls or galleries, shown in perspective, and also lighted and filled with people. At each of the doors leading into them stands a group of musicians; the main orchestra is on the front of the stage. This orchestra is for the genteel company; it is complete; first and second violins, viola, bass, horns and oboes, all fine gentlemen, in grand toilette of the last century, powdered and with swords at

their sides. These are *musicians*, in the sense of artists. The accessory orchestras are suited to the taste of the country people; a few violins with a bass are here enough. Here you see no gentlemen, right or left, but on each side a half dozen of grotesque figures, with torn elbows, visible suspenders, and red noses. Each band has a table before it with music desks, for form's sake, and wine bottles without glasses, the necessary auxiliaries to their execution. These are *fiddlers* (*musikanten*), as you would call mere players. The scattered groups upon the stage exhibit the picturesque confusion of a picture by Teniers. Here a company of drinkers; or a tender pair, who betray their feelings in pantomime; farther on some individuals playing cards; others, who philosophically throw themselves from the arms of Bacchus into those of Morpheus; others are already settled under the table; while a few dancers, decked with feathers and embroidery, are promenading to and fro with their country ladies on their arms, until the dance begins anew. Galloned lacqueys pass round refreshments and serve these boors with an air of the deepest respect. Ladies and gentlemen avail themselves without stint of the large hospitality offered them. In the midst of the orgy moves the man, who is the soul of it, in brilliant attire, which sets off his fine form still more, and with the inimitable grace of an Amphitryon issues his orders to his high steward, Leporello.

This whole picture unfolds itself spontaneously to the fancy, during the Allegro in E flat major, 6-8 time, which marshals us into the spacious halls of Don Giovanni. This is one of those pieces in our opera, which the greatest composers, expressly or silently, place above all attempts at imitation or rivalry; then again there are other pieces which every one believes he could have made as well. Which of them were the most difficult to make? We shall know as soon as either the one or the other has been accomplished. In the sphere of light music nothing certainly seems lighter than this Allegro in 6-8, which follows the sublime and learned Trio of the three masks. A music, which, without exactly being dance music, might be played in the intervals of a ball, or by itself, since it is independent of the voice-parts. The voices on their side sing and declaim to this melody, so perfectly continuous in all its sentences from beginning to end, as if they troubled themselves as little about the orchestra, as that does for them. The spirit of the ball animates the instrumentation; in the song parts you find all the little occurrences and intrigues, inseparably connected with a dancing company, faithfully described. We have the jealous husband watching his lady, and the young fellow silly making his court to her, without its having that appearance. Giovanni and Leporello outwardly are busied with nothing, but doing the honors of the house. *Ehi caffè! cioccolate! sorbetti! confetti!* (Coffee this way! chocolate! sherbets! &c.) But nothing will operate upon Masetto. *La briconna fa festa* (The flirt is quite *complaisant* to him); that is what occupies him, what torments him and makes the food stick in his throat. When Zerlina sees the wry features of the dear man, she cannot help smiling and repeating after Don Juan: *Quel Masetto mi par stralunato* (This Masetto seems to me bewildered). Already the ball works with her. So much the worse for him, who has com-

mitted the stupidity of carrying her there. We know of no more neatly rounded melodies, no more lightsome grace, more perfect naturalness, more lively merriment, and no more transporting dramatic illusion, than this *tempo*.

*Maestoso*, in 2-4 time, in C major, the orchestra with all the instruments, trumpets and drums! Leporello, who is commissioned to conduct to their places all the dignitaries who figure at a court gala, advances with the pompous air of a master of ceremonies to receive the masks. *Venite piu avanti, vezzose mascherette*. Giovanni, who had expected no ladies in the strict sense of the word, recognizes persons of his own rank in the newly arrived guests. He receives them with the dignified courtesy of a man of high station, who may forget himself perhaps before the common people, if he has his reasons for it, but not among his peers. *E aperto a tutti quanti, viva la liberta* (Everybody is welcome, *viva* &c.) And the chorus joins in tumultuously: *Viva, viva la liberta!* When the cry of freedom resounds with such violence in the multitude, we know, no good comes of it. We shall see. Giovanni orders the dance to be renewed, and the dancers take their places; the dramatic orchestra pauses, and the first orchestra plays the minuet, which we have already heard in the distance. This time it sets out in a higher key, namely G.

#### THREE DANCE TIMES AT ONCE.

The couples in the front hall, in noble and pompous steps, lead off the Minuet, in which the older Vestris found matter for such deep reflections. Giovanni dances, in expectation of what is better, with Zerlina, and converses with her; Masetto, who has been consigned to the particular attention of Leporello, who tries to force himself upon him as a partner, struggles against the rogue like an obstinate ram taken by the horns. Anna, who observes this manœuvre, cannot restrain her indignation, and expresses it in the energetic passage: *Resister non poss' io*. Elvira and Ottavio conjure her to be calm. Meanwhile the spirit of the dance seizes upon all the guests in the second hall; there however they will have no minuet, they want a contra-dance. Orchestra No. 2 tunes G, D, A, E. The bass grumbles its G, to tune it down a little, whereupon after a prelude the lively 2-4 time begins. In the third hall they are for a waltz. Orchestra No. 3, after it has tuned and preluded, falls into a hellish *tempo*; the couples fly round in the whirl of the 3-8 time, jostle, tread on one another and, losing their balance through mutual collisions and through the richly enjoyed wine, fall to the floor. When the audience see the contra-dance and the waltz, they will understand the music. And what becomes then of the minuet? The minuet, whose Spanish grandeur could not for a moment forget its composure for the drama's sake, is also not at all deranged by the jumping in the other halls. The world may go to pieces round the minuet, yet it cannot be forced a single iota from its course. And the affairs of the acting persons? These go on as usual in such cases; that is to say, the three-fold *tempo* of the ball, so far from causing any hindrance, really favors them!

To combine three different rhythms in this way, is no such exceedingly difficult problem in composition. The art however does not lie in that. The grand stroke of genius in this kind of Witches' Sabbath is to be sought in the invention



of the melody of the minuet, which first of all, in its peculiar function as principal song, had to be simple, clear, agreeable to the ear, perfectly proportioned, and entirely suited to the character of the step which it accompanies. In the second place it had to accommodate itself with wonderful pliability to the melodic and declamatory phrases of the singers, that is to say, to the language of the most various passions. Finally this melody had to support the two other instrumental melodies, so in contrast with the minuet and with each other, not only in the rhythm, but in the choice of figures and the æsthetic character of each of these three dances. Separate these melodies and listen to them singly. That of the minuet moves with the step of a procession; that of the contradance is lively, without going too fast; that of the waltz goes like the wind. This extraordinary swiftness comes from the fact, that the waltz, relatively to the other two rhythms, is not exactly 3-8 measure. Its pointed quarters have only the value of simple quarters in the principal tempo, so that one bar of the minuet is equal to three bars of the waltz.

#### STORMY CONCLUSION.

But suddenly a shriek is heard from behind the scenes. *Gente aiuto!* (help, good people!) The three orchestras and all the dancers break off at once, and the dramatic orchestra, which had paused during the ball, falls impetuously in with an *Allegro assai*, 4-4, in E flat major, commencing with a powerful *unisono*, which is taken note for note from a scene in "Idomeneo." They rush against the side door, through which Zerlina has been carried out. *Ora grida da quel lato, Ah gittiamo giù la porta* (The sound is from this side, let us break the door down). Amid these threatening phrases, are mingled, in wonderful modulation, the accusing cries of the orchestra. The violins in strong strokes take the tonic and dominant chords of D minor, and the door gives way. F major, 4-4, *Andante maestoso*. Zerlina is rescued; with her appears Don Juan, dragging in Leporello by the hair: *Ecco il birbo!* (Behold the rascal!) A miserable farce, by which nobody is deceived. He knows it too; since in case of need he has stuck pistols into his belt. The three take off their masks; Giovanni is somewhat alarmed, when he recognizes them. Beautiful phrases in Canon imitation, words quivering with rage, syllables which fall one after another, as if to weigh heavier upon the conscience of the evil-doer. *Tutto, tut-to già-si sa* (All now is known). Each for himself brings forward his grievance. Soon however the anger of them all finds a common voice; the majestic storm breaks out at last in the chorus: *Trema, trema scelerato!* (Tremble, wretch!) the crown of all finales. C major, Allegro. The heaviness of the first shock is so great, that even Giovanni feels it: *E confusa la mia testa* (My head is confused). His answers and retaliations to the more and more impetuous accusations of the chorus show us this person in a new light. Until now Don Juan had merely sported with humanity; one murder, two attempts at seduction, these were trifles. Now he lifts himself to combat it in all the greatness of his Titanic nature. No desperate effort is untried, to crush him; no curse is not invoked upon his guilty head. At first this angry mass is combined in a unison, which convulsively supports itself upon the sharp and unharmonious interval of the diminished Third:

*Fie-ro crudele!* then it strikes like lightning in the octave: *trema!* (tremble!) and finally it battles in descending chromatic scale with infatuated obstinacy against the bass: *Trema, trema, trema, o scelerato!* To the imprecations of the human race heaven itself adds its testimony against the godless sinner; a storm out of doors mingles its thundering harmony with the harmonious fury of the chorus and the orchestra; lightnings flash and cross each other in the triplets of the violins. This storm of voices and instruments grows more and more in leaps of Thirds and Fifths, and climbs with the aid of modulation higher and higher, as if it would reach the clouds and blend with the thunder. It is not possible to praise the creator of such music, but we must thank the poet, who has inspired him to it:

Odi il tuon della vendetta,  
Che ti fischia d'ogni intorno;  
Sul tuo capo, in questo giorno,  
Il suo fulmine cada.

(Hear the sound of the revenge  
That whistles all about thee;  
On thy head, this very day,  
Its thunderbolt shall fall.)

Don Juan, who at first finds himself bewildered, or better speaking, deceived in his expectations, becomes calm again in the face of danger. The sight of a furious multitude, who seek his life, the gleam of a drawn sword, the roll of the thunder restore him to himself; he recovers his composure, the more the world seems to waver under him, and he calls out in full consciousness of his power, he alone holding in balance the chorus, the orchestra and the storm: *Se cadesse ancora il mondo, nulla mai temer mi fa* (If the world now should fall, I should not fear). What greatness is required, to realize the image contained in this sentence, which in and for itself is nothing but a common-place hyperbole, since for the poetry in the verses it says too much! But when you hear this thundering voice, which parts the masses of the chorus and rivals the storm, which draws the whole chorus after itself, and makes it whirl with the hurried and canonic tempo, which it impresses upon the piece towards the end, then the aforesaid text ceases to be metaphorical. The steel flashes in the hands of Giovanni; his look is like that of the live Medusa; the crowd gives way unwillingly to let him pass. After he has reached the back of the stage without further hindrance, he sheathes his sword again, fires his pistols into the air, and vanishes with a fiendish laugh, as Da Ponte has expressed it. For this pantomime the composer leaves him nine bars of *ritorno*.

[To be continued.]

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

#### THE GREEN TREE IN AUTUMN.

[From the German of H. HEINE.]

Cold and dreary clouds of autumn  
Float above the vale and hill;  
Tempest-stripped the trees are standing,  
Ghostly, in the silence chill.

Only one, in saddest silence,  
Only one, with leaves unshed,  
(Leaves by tears of longing nourished?)  
Lonely lifts its verdant head.

Ah! my heart is like this desert,  
And the tree which there I see  
Green as summer, is the image,  
Fairest, best beloved! of thee!

H.

#### What Music owes to Italy and Germany.

[Concluded from last week.]

But we must correct a few more of the historical errors to which the *Tribune* has treated its readers. Boccherini did not establish the quintet before Haydn. In 1768 he published his first work, *Six Symphonies*, which were really violin quartets, with obligato violoncello accompaniment. But Haydn had written his first quartet in 1751; that is, about seventeen years previously. The first sonatas were not those of Corelli, but of JOHANN KUHNAU, a predecessor of Seb. Bach at the St. Thomas School, Leipzig, and were already published in 1695. Corelli was a violinist, and wrote and performed compositions which he called sonatas; but those had as little to do with that which we call a sonata, as the *sinfonias* of the Italians with our symphonies. Kuhnau laid the stepping-stone to those sonatas for the piano-forte, which were among Beethoven's greatest triumphs: and the first genuine sonata was by Emanuel Bach, who may also be considered as the founder of modern piano-forte playing. His *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, is the first attempt to give a well-grounded method for this branch of art. Besides Emanuel Bach, Germany has had, or has as pianists, (amongst others,) Wölfl, Steibelt, Mozart, Hummel, Moscheles, Kalkbrenner, Czerny, Cramer, Berger, Carl Mayer, Carl Maria Von Weber, Thalberg, Henselt, Dreyshock, Clara Schumann, and Liszt. Yes, Liszt—notwithstanding the disclaimer of the *Tribune*—who, born in Hungary it is true, came to Vienna while yet a mere boy, and there studied with Czerny. With no shadow of reason can Liszt be classified with any other school of pianism than the German. So that not "one only," but many of the "superlative piano celebrities" are German. The very man, however, whom the *Tribune* probably considers the first of pianists, Thalberg, is far differently estimated by the artists of Germany.

It is true that Germany did not give birth to a Pasta or a Rubini; but it did produce a CAROLINE UNGER, who was decidedly as great as any Italian singer of the greatest fame—a fact which was acknowledged by the Italians themselves, when she electrified her audiences at Naples, Rome, and Milan. Mme. Mara, Mme. Schroeder-Devrient, Mme. Henriette Sontag, Johanna Wagner, Sophie Crivelli, Staudigl, and hosts of others of whom the *Tribune* seems not to have heard, were or are Germans. As to violin-playing, who is the man who has educated in this art the most celebrated performers of the day, and who has himself created a school? It is the German, Louis Spohr. Shall we further name ERNST? or JOACHIM, the acknowledged greatest violinist of his age?

We know perfectly well how much we owe to Italy. We know the high position that country occupied in art from the days of PALESTRINA, down through the seventeenth century, and to the middle of the eighteenth. We are well aware that Palestrina created the so-called sublime style, and purified church-compositions from the barbarisms, and the paper curiosities of the school of Netherlands; but we shall not imitate the *Tribune*, and claim that he did this because his master was from the Netherlands. No, he accomplished all this, in spite of the training received from Goudimel. We are far, very far, from ignoring or disdaining the great services which Italy (as well as other nations, and more especially France) has rendered to musical art; but, nevertheless, we can not help repeating that, "Whenever (in modern times) musical art has entered upon a new phase, and has made new steps in its progress, these have originated from German genius and German inspirations." The Quintet, the Musical Drama, the Opera, the Sonata, the Oratorio; all these are due to German genius, and the grandest inspirations in each of these branches have come from Germans. Men like Sebastian Bach, Handel, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, can not be claimed by any other nation than that of Germany; and however exalted, however serviceable, however great the celebrities of France and Italy may be considered, they can not be compared with the brilliant musical lights of Germany. What is it in any French, English, or Italian composer that has at once given him a position and a superiority over his rivals? It is his adoption of the German style. Look at Berlioz. What makes him so original in the eyes of his countrymen? It is the German element in his music; it is that thoroughly German striving for what is new, which is its greatest characteristic. It is just that element in the character of German musicians which has impelled them continually onward. It is this impulse which, in spite of political and other kindred hindrances, keeps them searching and searching, while other nations seem to rest, satisfied with past systems and past achievements. It is this, which at the present

hour, has caused music to enter upon a new phase of that revolution which the German Gluck commenced in dramatic, and the German Beethoven in instrumental music. All this while Italy, the *Tribune's* "mother of arts," is evidently in the very last stages of her artistic existence; supplying her theatres with singers even from Germany, France, and from our own America.

Time has been when Italy was the mother of arts; but before her day came that of Greece, and before Greece came Egypt. But the sceptre has by turns passed from all these, and is now most undoubtedly held by Germany. Westward the star of Art, as well as of empire, takes its way; and the enlightened thinkers of the old world are not a few, who prophesy boldly that the day will come and indeed is not far distant, when America shall be the land of Art. The prophecy is founded in past history and past experience, and is by no means weakened by the fact that as yet we have accomplished but little in music.

"OLD FOLK'S CONCERT."—A quaint and quizzical correspondent of the N. Y. *Courier and Enquirer*, writing from Boston about musical matters, relates the following:

In private we have plenty of music. Thanksgiving Day I attended a concert at which were performed, among other choice pieces—*Edom*, by O. Holden, 1800. This must have been a very popular tune in the country. The imitated point is on the words "He makes the grass—and cor-orn to grow."—*Invitation* "as corrected," from the Rural Harmony, *ibid.* The point is on "fly like a youthful, &c." *Worthington*, Mass. Harmony, 1808. "They beat the air, &c;" *Industry*, Vienna, etc., *ad libitum*;—"Elegy on the death of Eliphar Hibbard Bolles, who was instantly killed by a cart wheel's running over his head, Dec. 30th, 1801, aged 4 years 6 months." This is less remarkable for counterpoint than for dramatic pathos. "The Song of Songs," from the Psalmist's Companion, Isaiah Thomas, 1793. The words, "let him kiss me," and "as the apple tree," come in with powerfully effective repetition in this composition. In short, we do something in the way of music of the strictly K. N. school.

#### Diary Abroad.—No. 10.

BERLIN, JAN. 21.—Who has not read of ALLEGRI's "MISERERE!" What lover of music has not in imagination listened to it as to strains absolutely unearthly? Who, especially such as are acquainted with Cleveland's article in the N. Y. Review some dozen years since, have not felt that until they hear this music, there is still a point in the enjoyment of the products of musical genius not yet attained, though all that Handel, Bach, Mozart, Gluck, Haydn, Beethoven and Mendelssohn effected has become familiar? For my own part, I would have made the journey to Rome on the condition of going there blindfold and coming away next morning, could I have been conducted into the Sistine Chapel to hear the *Miserere*.

Still, though I had Dr. Burney's copy of it in my file of the *Harmonicon*, another copy in the *Leipziger Mus. Zeitung*, and still a third in the *Vienna Mus. Zeitung* for 1817, and had studied it over and over again, I could never make out that it is such a remarkable piece of music. You have the 51st psalm in Latin, which is sung in alternate verses by the choir, and chanted by the priests at the altar. The first half of the first verse is by the five-voiced chorus, the second half by the chorus of four parts. The next two verses are given by the priests, and then the two choruses again follow with the 4th and 6th verses (the 5th being omitted) to the same music. It is in fact the lesson of the day, as in our Episcopal churches, with this difference: the priests here chant their stanzas, and instead of the people reading theirs, the choir sings them—a part of the psalm being omitted. The music is very simple, and though quite artistic and scientific two hundred years ago, has always looked to me on paper rather common. *Omne ignotum pro magifico*. What a wonderful exploit has it been thought now for 85 years that Mozart in two visits to the Sistine Chapel stole the score of this great and marvellous composition! Holmes says, "the difficulty of putting down in notes the music performed by a double choir, abounding in imitation and traditional effects, of which one of

the chief is characterized by the absence of a perceptible rhythm, is scarcely conceivable." Bravo, Mr. Holmes! In the first place, your double choir is two choirs which sing separately, the music of the first or five-voiced choir being sung note for note six times over in the course of the psalm, and that of the four-voiced choir five times, and only on the last line of the psalm, to the words "Tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos," do you have a double chorus. Secondly, the music is a chant in which each choir has two chanting notes and two cadences, the cadences somewhat involved, perhaps, but nothing in comparison with what the boys at the Thomas school in Leipzig have to sing daily. The *Miserere* is thus divided, —4-2 time, *Larghissimo*—

1st choir, first chanting note and four bars cadence; second chanting note and seven bars cadence.

2d choir, first chanting note and three bars cadence, second chanting note and four bars cadence.

Double choir, grand cadence of seven bars!

The youthful prodigy, Mozart, then, had (excepting the *canto fermos*) to fix in his memory and write out, eleven bars of music, which in two visits to the chapel he heard twelve times over, and seven bars which he heard ten times, and seven bars (in nine parts) which he heard twice; in all twenty-five bars of excessively slow music, church music too, with which he had been more or less occupied every day of his life since he began to think and reason. If Mozart had never done anything greater than that, Mr. Holmes would never have written his life. A friend of mine, upon once hearing a chant by the Dom Choir here some weeks ago, wrote it down and sent it home to his old church in S—, where it has become a favorite.

"But this friend is not a mere child as Mozart was."

No, he is no Mozart,—begging his pardon.

In the case of the *Miserere*, whatever traditional effects, through dynamic variations, may be produced by the papal choir in the several stanzas, the notation remains the same, and it was this which Mozart carried off.

But how account for the effects produced? They are scenic, dramatic, theatrical, in part, and in part are owing to other causes worthy a word or two. The auditor goes there a long time before mass in order to secure an entrance into the chapel, which will not admit more than five or six hundred spectators. Here he is crushed and jammed and crowded through the performance of a long mass, and then at last he is rewarded by *le grand spectacle* of the pope and cardinals playing penitents—as described in all the writings on the subject. Think of the physical condition in which one is at the time; think of the effect of changing from the ordinary music of the mass to a simple old chant, breathed out into the solemn darkness half lighted up by the flames streaming from the huge cross suspended there in mid air; and though the music be the very baldest and most common-place chords without melody—which this is not—still it would strike you at the time as unsurpassable. When the Pope sent word to Francis I. of Austria, in reply to the accusation that the holy old daddy had deceived him in the matter of this music, "We sent you the score, but did not send you the singers," he should have gone farther and added, "nor did we come ourselves with all our costumes and paraphernalia of repentance, with our dark chapel, our burning cross, and exhausted multitude of spectators." Upon its production in Vienna, in Leipzig, in Cassel, and in Munich, in every case it fell dead upon the audience.

Now another point. I doubt if in any other art novelty has so much influence in producing effect, as in music. For common and very vulgar examples of this, take "negro minstrelsy," the sentimentality of the trash sung by wandering bands of Hutchinsons and others, or the accordion mania. So strikingly beautiful were the fizzy, wheezy, asthmatic tones of the accordion thought, that scarcely a house throughout the length and breadth of our land was without its "squeal,"—no wonder we have become such a nervous, fidgetty race! Take a higher example. Americans are arriving in this city on an average three or four a week, the year round; sometimes twenty in a week, sometimes more. The musical ones are all agog to hear the men and boy choir in the Dom. They hear it; Oh there never was anything like that! that is what they call music! All they ever heard is nothing to this, and could they only hear this for the rest of their lives, they would be perfectly satisfied. Some

of them come here to spend the winter, or to enter the University. They will hear that choir every Sunday—rain, hail, earthquake itself shall not prevent that. Well, I laugh and tell them, they do sing exquisitely, but it is not a kind of music which can wear long—our ear, our very nature wants the true soprano—we must have the feminine principle—it is too much like Platonic love, &c. Then I "catch it"—There, that's just one of your absurd transcendental notions. You think that your taste must be a law to all who hear music, and that because you happen to think a mixed chorus better than this, or than choruses of men's voices, that therefore it is so. The fact is, that our folks at home will never know what good music is—choir music, I mean—until they can hear something like this.

Very well, I say, and laugh again.

Some Monday, about six or eight weeks later, I meet A or B, and inquire how he liked the Dom choir yesterday? "Oh, I was not there. To tell truth, it don't pay to get up these cold mornings and go down there to hear them. It is the same thing over and over again, and besides I have subscribed to their concerts. One comes off next Saturday night, don't you want my ticket? I don't care anything about going."

As soon as he has gone, I enjoy laugh No. 3.

Now nine out of ten who crowd themselves into the Sistine Chapel to hear Allegri's *Miserere*, and who come home and confirm all that has been written about it, have never heard any good choir singing, except from our usual mixed choirs. Here, however, for the first time with most, they hear another kind of choral music, and all for the first time hear a chorus in which the artificial voice of the castrati supplies alto and soprano. Musically, this circumstance alone must work most powerfully to enhance the unearthly effect already theatrically produced.

Speaking of the influence of novelty recalls to mind a free, public concert, I heard in May, 1850, in the market place of Geneva, in Switzerland. It was vocal, and afforded me the highest amusement. I suppose I never laughed so much at another musical entertainment as at that, and yet probably no other person in the neighborhood smiled. The vocalists, ranged round the little square, were probably fifty in number. The language was foreign to me, and the only word I succeeded in catching was "è-haw," which was often repeated, and that too with the deepest gravity on the part of the singers. The music was in short strophes, consisting of several repetitions of "è-haw," followed by a deep bass note with a pause (—) given with a breadth and strength of lung not easily described. [Gardner in his "Music of Nature," has attempted to give some idea of the tune.] We had not only solos, duets, trios, and so on up to semi and full choruses, with rondo and fugue-like passages, but at times a single voice, after ejaculating the "è-haw" *ff.* would rest, while from some neighboring street came faintly back, as in Jenny Lind's echo song, a hardly audible "è haw" in return. Among my musical experiences I recollect nothing so irresistibly ludicrous as the concert of Asses (four-footed) at Geneva. But the little fellows have trotted me rather wide of the mark.

The occasion of all this long diatribe was the programme of the Soirée of the Dom Choir last evening, upon which the first piece was Allegri's *Miserere*. We were informed previously that this was to be sung with all the traditional effects, and in accordance (as I understood it) with the dynamic marks in red pencil upon a copy in the Library, if I mistake not, which marks are supposed to be from Mozart's hand. One thing is certain; that if the music be indeed extraordinary, this choir will show it to be so. Besides the *Miserere*, there was: 2d, Chorus for Men's voices, "Terribilis est locus iste," by MASTIOLLOTTI—a name quite unknown to me; 3d, *Crucifixus*, in eight parts, by LOTTI, the old Venetian Kapellmeister, contemporary with Handel; 4th, Half of Beethoven's Sonata for Pianoforte and Violoncello (op. 102.), and 5th, "Regina Celi," by CALDARA, who died about 1763, after half a century of service in the music of the Court at Vienna.

Part II. 6th, Motet, (8 voices) "Jauchzet dem Herrn," which the programme attributed to Bach, but which our Bachists say is a composition by Schicht, who died at Leipzig in 1823. 7th, The rest of that Sonata. 8th, Motet for Sopranos and Altos, Mendelssohn. 9th, Chorus by Haydn.



The Sing-Akademie Hall was full, and evidently the great point of attraction was the first piece. It was sung—it was sung finely, excellently. And then people looked at each other, and asked, "Is that that famous music?" I suppose not one person in the house last night would contradict the assertion that Allegri's *Miserere* was the poorest piece on the programme. I was not much disappointed, having so often in vain tried to find anything extraordinary in the printed music. I was most disappointed in the piece attributed to Bach. It did not seem to me equal to what I had heard of his on other occasions, nor to be in fact music of his day. But on learning that Bach wrote no eight-part piece, "*Jauchzet dem Herrn*," and that Schicht did, the mystery was cleared up. Folks do make mistakes even here.

[Whether it would not pay to give some funny specimens of criticism from this side the water?]

It is not easy to speak in too strong terms of the exquisite art with which this choir of eighty voices sang last night. It is not at all strange that people hearing them for the first time should so overrate this kind of choir—they cannot overrate this choir—and yet last night long before the close many persons became weary and left, and I myself could hardly hold out quite to the end. I have many a time sat out from three to four hours of Oratorio with less uneasiness than these two hours last evening. Still, if they were going to America, I could conscientiously recommend their performances as being better worthy of a generous support than anything else which Europe has thus far sent us. In saying this I have the welfare of Music in general among us in view.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, FEB. 24, 1855.

### Concerts.

[Crowded out last week.]

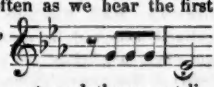
**MENDELSSOHN QUINTETTE CLUB.**—The seventh chamber concert, on Tuesday (last week,) was another very choice and satisfactory feast of the best kind of music. The programme embraced three entire pieces in the Quartet form, and all were played with admirable spirit, delicacy and expression. The opening piece was the favorite and ever welcome Quartet of BEETHOVEN, in B flat, (No. 6 of op. 18.) We never enjoyed it more, and judged by Oulibicheff's severest ideal of what a violin quartet should be, it certainly seemed to us as chaste, as clear, as purely and abstractly musical, without admixture of anything dramatic or descriptive, as the best of Mozart, while it has the peculiar Beethoven individuality and fire. Certainly this is true of the Allegro, Adagio and Scherzo. It is only in the finale, that the verbal title, *La Malinconia*, and the somewhat capricious and sudden alternation between those mystical and mournful slow chords and the dancing sunlight of the Allegro suggests any departure. Yet it may be asked whether even that does not justify itself in the effect produced.

The novelty *par excellence* of the evening was a Quartet, (No. 1, in E flat,) by CHERUBINI, the Italian who wrote in the most learned manner of the Germans, and whose Masses and Operas rank among the highest productions of their kind—whose praise alone Beethoven seemed to value when he published his great Mass in D. Like every thing we ever heard of Cherubini's, this Quartet was exceedingly elaborate and long; crowded with ideas, beautiful and bold ones, all worked out, varied and enforced by all the means of harmony and counterpoint. It was extremely interesting from the beginning to the end, and we

hope to hear it many times; for from one hearing, without having seen the notes, it is not easy to speak of so great a work. But nothing should we more rejoice to see in the next programme than this same wonderful Quartet of Cherubini.—MENDELSSOHN's first Quintet, that which is so full of his fairy fancies, closed the concert, and delightfully.

Another novelty (for us) was the singing of an air from that fine old Italian composer, MARCELLO, called *Saria pur dolce amor*; not one of Marcello's "Psalms." It is truly a noble, unaffected, lovely melody, and it was sung with the utmost taste and feeling by Mr. ARTHURSON, with a fitting violoncello obligato part by WULF FRIES. This was warmly encored, but in vain. Mr. A.'s other song, from Shakspeare's "As you Like it," *Blow, blow, thou winter wind*, composed by Dr. ARNE, and one of the very best of old English songs, was also most charmingly rendered, and had to be repeated. The piano accompaniments were nicely played, only a little too loudly sometimes, by Mr. TRENKLE.—A *morceau de salon*, called *Adagio sentimentale*, by ERNST, certainly one of the most sensible and impressive violin solos we remember to have heard, and new here withal, was played in faultless and expressive style by AUGUST FRIES.

Seldom indeed have we had more unalloyed enjoyment at a Chamber concert than at this, and we were rather painfully reminded that the series will be ended with one more. We were pleased to learn, however, that there have been many urgent requests for a continuance of these concerts, and that the Club are ready to give a supplementary series of four more, as soon as a sufficient number of tickets (at \$2.50 for the four) shall be subscribed for. We confidently trust that the success of this scheme will be announced at the last regular concert, which takes place next Tuesday evening.

**ORCHESTRAL UNION.**—The Symphony in the last two Wednesday Afternoon Concerts, was our never-failing old first favorite, the No. 5 (in C minor) of BEETHOVEN; always the more dear to music-lovers hereabouts as having been the entering wedge of symphony in Boston. (What shades arise, as often as we hear the first movement of its strange,  bold theme:

of the old Academy concerts and those rapt listenings from the sky-parlor of the departed Odeon!) Mr. ZERRAHN's orchestra played it, especially the second time, with admirable precision, euphony and clearness, and with a real *verve*, as if every instrument spake for a heartily conspiring soul behind itself. The musical intention was *expressed*;—not so powerfully as it might have been with thrice the number of strings, but feelingly, palpably and truly. In the Allegro and the heavenly Andante, just the right *tempo* seemed to be hit, and we noticed no want save that in some of those rapid, nervously emphatic phrases of the former,



the ear actually heard only the accented note in each phrase, leaving the other three notes to be supplied by the mind's ear. It could hardly be otherwise, we suppose, in a distant seat, except with a much more solid mass of violins. We

thought a slightly less quick tempo might have enhanced the solemnity of the answering (trumpet) theme in the Scherzo; but it was very nicely played, and the basses in that exceedingly brisk little fugue-like scramble which they have to go through, came out remarkably distinct, letting not a note fall to the ground. The glorious triumphal march, which crowns the whole, was all it could be without greater mass of tone. The attention of the audience was marked throughout.

Last time too the *Freyshütz* overture (a welcome substitute for Meyerbeer's to *Struensee*), and a piece long linked in the affections of Bostonians with the Fifth Symphony, was played with most perfect spirit and *ensemble*. Familiar as it was, its charm was fresh, and it electrified the audience. We assure our readers, they have not heard the overture to *Der Freyschütz*, if they have not heard Zerrahn's orchestra play it. It is their best piece.—Between this and the symphony we should have mentioned the very brilliant violin concerto by Dr. BERIOT, in which our friend SCHULTZE really surpassed himself, rendered every thing with a vigor and a purity of intonation, which we have not heard surpassed. Had they stopped here, with these three pieces, we should have had a concert of rare unity and completeness, and worth twice the price to hear. But there were added lighter pieces, waltzes, arrangements, and the overture to *Semiramide*.

But the audiences? There was still a slight increase of numbers; yet at no time has the audience seemed large enough to pay the musicians for their time; and what we have continually feared is at last brought home to us in the announcement that the two next afternoon concerts will be the *last*. Will not the music-lovers at length rally and show two such houses that the concerts must perforce go on. Doubtless it depends on the musical public whether that shall be. The support of grand classical concerts thus far this winter has been far from worthy of the fame of Boston. It speaks not well for us, when we give *all* to a short month of opera, or when the singing of Rossini's "Moses in Egypt," commands a greater crowd than the best orchestral feasts of Mozart, Beethoven and Mendelssohn.

**MUSICAL FUND SOCIETY.**—The long deferred third concert drew to the Music Hall a much larger audience than the first two. The bill of fare was novel and exceptional, the selections from the standard classical repertoire being limited to an overture by WEBER, and one of HAYDN's light and elegant symphonies; after which First Part, or prelude, the remainder of the evening, much the largest portion, was occupied by the first hearing of Mr. C. C. PERKINS's Cantata, called "The Pilgrims."

The rendering of the overture to "Oberon" was hardly up to the mark of the preceding concerts; it had some "rough places" which required to be "made plain;" yet other parts were very effective. Haydn's Symphony, in D, the one with an Adagio introduction in D minor, leading into a merry, almost dance-like Presto in the major, for a first movement, was finely played. The Andante, and the pastoral Minuet and Trio, gave great pleasure; and the Finale, more abstract and ingeniously contrapuntal in its style, is exceedingly graceful, and was brought out with great nicety and clearness.

Of the new Cantata we have too little confidence in our own first impressions, to venture to pronounce upon its musical value as a whole. These impressions, whatever they may have been at the moment, as part after part claimed notice, have not as yet shaped themselves (our own fault perhaps) into a positive and abiding whole. It does not lie so clearly in our mind that we have any right to say success or failure; and inasmuch as it is to be repeated this evening, we deem it wiser and more just to all concerned to delay judgment. We may say however that it contained some interesting and effective numbers, and was received not only with kindness, but in several parts with evidences of decided pleasure by the audience. The poem, written by H. F. CHORLEY, describes the joy and gratitude of our Pilgrim Fathers upon landing on these shores. Neither the poem nor the music suggests much stern Puritanism about them; they seem a jovially pious, happy set, and in the opening chorus call for "wine to drink with one another."

We were quite interested in the first movement, Adagio, expressing "prayer and leave-taking," and in the first half or so of the Allegro ("typical of the voyage") of the Overture. An arrangement of this, for four hands, has been published by Nathan Richardson, so that our readers may satisfy themselves more clearly of its intrinsic musical contents. The first chorus, too, though light, was quite agreeable. The religious chorals, when sung in full chorus by members of the HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY, were to us the most impressive portions of the work. In some of the solo and concerted pieces, sung by Miss BOTHAMLY, soprano, Miss TWICHELL, contralto, Mr. MILLARD, tenor, and Mr. WETHERBEE, bass, we felt more or less of discord, and we could not resist a suspicion that the instrumentation, often elaborate, crowded and full of motion, instead of relieving the voices, made their task ungrateful; but of this we will not judge yet. These solo-ists are among our very best singers, and every effort seemed to be made on the part of all the performers to do the work full justice. Yet they will undoubtedly succeed better a second time. Once begun, it should be fairly, fully heard. After that, it will be time to raise the inquiry, how far it is politic (as a general rule) to use the regular evenings of such concert societies, our stated opportunities (too few at best) for hearing the acknowledged master-pieces of the Art, for the first trials of new works.

HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.—"Moses in Egypt" was revived for last Sunday evening's concert, and the Music Hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, looking more like old times than any thing the concert history of this winter has afforded, since the "Messiah" at Christmas. Miss ANNA STONE was one principal attraction, and her splendid upper voice, especially with chorus, seemed more wonderful than ever. The other solos were sustained by Mrs. WENTWORTH, Mrs. HILL, Mr. ARTHURSON, Mr. WHEAT, Mr. AIKEN and Mr. ADAMS. The last named, has not so rich and telling a bass as his predecessor, Mr. BALL, but sang very well. Mr. AIKEN surpassed himself, his tones springing forth with a more elastic and resonant quality than was his wont. The others sang finely, but there was occasional falseness of intonation, and as a whole the thing did not pass off quite so well as last year.

Yet many of the choruses sounded very finely, and as for the orchestra, we never heard the luxury and brilliancy of the Rossini music brought out with such delicious clearness, as this time by the ORCHESTRAL UNION.

WARREN STREET CHAPEL.—The concert in the Music Hall for the benefit of this institution—one of the most useful charities of our city—drew a full house. The children of Mr. BARNARD's school completely filled the stage which was decorated in honor of the day—(Washington's birthday) with evergreens and flags. The children sang very nicely some choruses and a hymn by Dr. T. W. PARSONS for the occasion. The rest of the programme was given by Miss STONE, Miss HUMPHREY, Mrs. RAMETTI, and Messrs. MILLARD, GROVES and TRENKLE, who volunteered for the occasion, which was apparently most successful in a pecuniary point of view.—The children's chorus was conducted by Mr. C. H. CLARKE, Mr. Trenkle being the organist and pianist.

MUSIC AT HAND.—To-night the MUSICAL FUND SOCIETY repeat Mr. Perkins's Cantata, and offer a programme further enriched by MENDELSSOHN's wonderful "Fingal's Cave" overture, and a violin solo and duet by the brothers MOLLENAUER.—THE QUINTETTE CLUB next Tuesday will repeat the CHERUBINI quartet, besides other fine things, the song of MARCELLO, by Mr. Arthurson, &c.

## Musical Correspondence.

### From NEW YORK.

FEB. 20.—I have just returned from EISELDE's fourth Quartette Soirée, and am so well satisfied, that I must give you some account of it on the spot, though at this late hour my remarks can be but brief. The programme promised us a Quintet (violin, two violas, 'cello, and flute), by KUHLAG, of whom you perhaps know more than I do; BEETHOVEN's Quartet in F, op. 18; a Trio by FRANZ SCHUBERT, played by Mr. SATTER, a new star in our musical horizon, and Messrs. NOLL and BERGNER; and *Batti, batti*, and MENDELSSOHN's sweet song, *Das erste Veilchen*, sung by MME. WALLACE BOUCHELLE.

The Quintet is a light and rather trivial composition, of which only the Minuetto pleased me particularly. A singular effect is produced by the flute in combination with the stringed instruments—not an altogether pleasing one. The execution of this piece was not equal to the usual efforts of Mr. Eiselde's "Quartette party;" several parts were quite confused. Beethoven's Quartet went all the better; it is very pleasing, in his earlier, Mozart-like style. Mme. Bouchelle gave us rather too many guttural notes, and too many grimaces in *Batti, batti*; nor was it sung lightly and gracefully enough. She did better in Mendelssohn's song, in spite of the icy reception which she met on coming out, and which really pained me for her sake. She is no favorite with our "appreciative few," but it should be remembered that all the performers at these Soirées are volunteer assistants of Mr. Eiselde, and have a claim to be treated kindly and courteously, at least.

How can I do justice in a few words to the beautiful Trio of Schubert, and the masterly rendering of it which it was our good fortune to hear? Mr. Satter is a quite young pianist, originally, I believe, an amateur artist, from Vienna, who has recently arrived here, and appeared in public for the first time to-night. His playing is, in my opinion, beyond anything that we have yet heard here, either from resident or transitory artists. His style is that of Liszt more than of any one else, combining immense force, astonishing fluency, great sweetness and expression where it is needed, and the art of making the notes sing, and often sound out and vibrate like those of an organ. And with all these a calmness, very far from coldness or *nonchalance*, which is a true sign of the artist. He proved himself such, too, by his selection, merely on account of its intrinsic beauty and worth, of this Trio, in which the parts of the different instruments are so interwoven and blended, that no one of them shows off to more advantage than

the others. And he was ably seconded by Messrs. Noll and Bergner. The Trio, like all Schubert's instrumental compositions, is beautiful, exciting, and entirely unique. The first Allegro reminds one a little of the marches for four hands. The Andante is one of those strange, almost monotonous melodies, moving only in the range of a few notes, like the slow movement in the posthumous Quatuor, or the song *La mort de la jeune fille*, and, like these, abounding in the richest, most beautiful harmonies. Then, in the Scherzo, there is a wild, joyous life, a motion, an excitement, which makes one feel as if borne along on the wings of the wind, while in the Finale, with its snatches of weird melody, one seems transported to another sphere.

Mr. Satter was called out twice, until he consented to show us his powers as a solo-player in a fantasia on *Norma*, apparently by Liszt. I cannot think that he chose this piece except to show us what he could do.—I regret to say that the audience was not very large, the opera probably having taken many away. BORNONIS.

FEB. 21.—If, at one time, GRISI and MARIO were a little piqued at the small appreciation of their powers by a New York audience, they must have become entirely reconciled to our public by the complete success of their last short season in this city. Whether it was the ambition not to be outdone by the Bostonians, or the prospect of the artists' near departure, the reduction of prices, or a combination of all these reasons, which caused the change,—enough, they were enthusiastically received, and have been singing for six nights to constantly increasing audiences. And in return, all their performances have been characterized by a hearty good-will, and the evident wish to leave the best impression. The artist-pair have appeared successively in *I Puritani*, *Lucrezia*, *Norma*, *Semiramide*, *La Favorita*, and last night again in *Lucrezia*. I am sorry to say that they labored under some disadvantages, such as the house in which they sang, the Metropolitan Theatre, not being well adapted for music, so that from the parquette you hear only tolerably, and from the first and second circles not well at all,—and the ill health of both SUSINI and BADIALI, which disabled the former for a night or two, and entirely prevented the latter from singing until Monday, in the *Favorita*. The orchestra, too, is a miserable one, and often so loud as to almost drown the vocal parts.

In *I Puritani*, GRISI can hardly do otherwise than well. Elvira is one of her rôles *par excellence*, and seems to suit the amount of voice which she still possesses, better than other parts which require more energy. BERNARDI took Badiali's part, and Susini being very hoarse, *Suoni la tromba* was omitted. The opera hardly seemed itself without that number. Mario was in excellent voice, and made the most of his rather tame part. The choruses were very weak in number, and consequently in volume; a deficiency which was however remedied in subsequent performances, though unfortunately their quality was not improved in like measure. They have been, with few exceptions, very indifferent throughout.

Mario's greatest triumph was on the following evening, in *Lucrezia*. I had not imagined that he could act as he did that night. He and Grisi were indeed everything in that performance; all beside bore the stamp of mediocrity—the choruses, Orsini, (who sang the drinking-song quite well, however,) and even the Duke, who, in the absence of Susini, (on account of illness,) was represented by Sig. AMATI-DUREUIL. This gentleman has decidedly what your Diarist calls "a wiggle" in his voice, viz: a constant *tremulando*, and appears to consider it one of the chief requisites of his part to roll his eyes and knit his brows. Yet I must do him the justice to say that in the Trio, inspired perhaps by Grisi and Mario, he did very well, and contri-



buted his share to the exquisite rendering of that beautiful number. It was deservedly encored, as was Mario's aria in the beginning of the third act, which has, in my opinion, very little merit besides that of showing off his voice to the best advantage. But that sounded no less beautiful in *Di pescator*, in the Trio, and in the dying scene—nowhere more so than in the latter. It was like what one imagines the song of the dying swan to be. Grisi was grand throughout—no, in *Com'e bello* I was disappointed: there was not, at first at least, enough tenderness in it. But in the denunciation scene, the poisoning scene, and most of all in the Finale, she surpassed herself.

*Norma* was a very fine performance throughout, only that *Casta Diva* was disturbed by a slight hoarseness on Grisi's part. Susini, as usual, made a superb *Orovoso*. Mario did his very best, and even *Donovani* sang and appeared much better than ever before. The house was crowded to excess, and many were disappointed in getting seats. Saturday night *Semiramide* and the last scene of *Lucia* were given, again to a crowded house. Every possible effort had been made to render the scenic effects in the former pompous opera as fine as possible, and yet, what was the result? Quantities of buckram and tinsel, glaring anachronisms in scenery and costume, (such as *Semiramide's* singing *Bel raggio* in the midst of a smiling English landscape, and *Idreno's* Indian followers being attired like our own native "red men"); half a dozen maidens in brown and red, another half dozen in white and blue, with small pasteboard harps in their hands, six small artificial negroes, one of whom had red hair, and excited much merriment, and so on; and all this so unhinged and lame, that it looked like a picture in which the perspective has been entirely disregarded. It will take a long time to bring these things to perfection in this country, though I am glad to say that a beginning has been made by the Academy of Music, in its really fine scenery and good costumes.

As regards the music of *Semiramide*, which I heard for the first time, I can only agree entirely with your own remarks of last week. It left me quite cold, and though I acknowledge the greatness of Grisi's acting in the temple scene, and her duets with Assur and Arsace, and her truly religious rendering of *Bel raggio*, yet they did not stir me up at all. Bernardi sang the part of Assur very creditably, but not as I imagine Badiali would have sung it. Susini was in his element again as the priest of the Magi, and sang as if he had never been hoarse at all, and in good tune throughout. Mario made so handsome an Indian prince, that it was quite provoking to see him thrown away upon the puppet of an Azema, and took the utmost pains in the little that he had to sing. The opera was very much shortened—besides minor omissions, the temple scene closed with the last chorus, the first scene between *Semiramide* and *Arsace* was left out, and the whole ended with their grand duet. The chief feature of the evening was the *début* of Signorina *VESTALI* (Westphal?) of the La Scala theatre, who took the part of *Arsace*. She has reason to be well satisfied with her reception. She looked the part admirably, possessing a splendid, majestic figure, a beautiful head, and fine, though not handsome face, and being perfectly *à son aise* upon the stage, and at home in her part. Her costume, too, was superb, and most complete, so that it really seemed as if we had a youthful hero of the ancient time before us in person. She has an agreeable contralto voice, of much compass, not remarkably powerful, nor very sweet, but flexible, and well schooled, with a very occasional tendency to flat. Her acting and singing, in the main, were spirited, though at times not quite correct in expression. Her scene and duet with *Semiramide*,

notwithstanding that their voices did not chord well, not being equal in power, was the best part of the performance. A pretty little scene occurred when, as the curtain fell, the two singers were called out. A bouquet was thrown them: *Vestvali* sprang to take it up, and offered it to Grisi, Grisi urged it upon her, and so the struggle continued for a few moments, until *Vestvali* pointed to her male costume as a proof that she could not accept of such offerings, and both disappeared, laughing, behind the curtain.—The curtain rose again upon a site of Grecian ruins, lit up by a dim moon. We were at a loss to comprehend what these had to do either with *Babylon*, in case we were yet to hear the last act of *Semiramide*, or if not, still less with Scotland. But when Mario made his appearance, pale and haggard, yet handsomer than ever in his sombre attire, and when he began to sing, we forgot all about the scenery that surrounded him, and gave ourselves up to the intoxication of listening to that sweetest of voices, which, as it poured forth its bell *alma innamorata*, its *tu la gioia in seno*, *ed io la morte*, and the like, had a thousand "tears in it." Who, that has once heard it, can ever forget it?

*La Favorita*, on Monday, was one of the most successful performances which these artists have given. All the tickets had been sold on Saturday, except those in the hands of speculators, which went off at enormous prices. The house was consequently full to overflowing. All were in the best voice, and *Badiali's* re-appearance was hailed with delight. *Grisi's O mio Fernando* was worthy of her, and Mario's *Angiol d'amor* most delicious. The latter again showed, too, how he can act. The choruses, too, were much better in this representation, and indeed, in *Semiramide* also, than they had been before. At the close, Mr. HACKETT, whose benefit it was, was called out, and responded in a short speech. He mentioned the disadvantages which had met him on his first arrival in this country with Grisi and Mario, in the shape of heat, drought, sickness and hard times, which acted so unfavorably on his success, that he was at one time nearly discouraged. But he had better luck in Philadelphia, which only increased in Boston, to the good taste of whose public he owed a great deal.—He had made \$12,000 in that city, and since his return to New York he could not complain of want of success here. As so many persons have been unable to obtain tickets for this evening's performance, Mad. Grisi and Sig. Mario had kindly volunteered to appear once more in *Lucrezia* the next night, and to devote the proceeds of the performance to charity.

Accordingly, last night, a tolerable audience were once more assembled, to bid farewell to the great singers. The performance was far better as a whole, than on Wednesday. The choruses had been enlarged, and did better. *Vestvali* took the part of Orsini, and Susini that of the Duke. *Vestvali* made a handsome, graceful Orsini, and sang very well indeed. The drinking-song was particularly fine, and was encored. Mario did even better than at the previous representation; sang so deliciously that it was hard to think of losing all chance of hearing those sweetest tones any more. Grisi was all herself, and Susini, though somewhat hoarse, was a vast improvement upon *Amati-Dubrenil*. The great singers were called out twice, both after the second act, and at the end; bouquets came flying, Mr. Hackett, in a few words, tendered the audience the warm thanks of the artist-pair, who smiled and bowed assent,—and thus ended the American career of *GRISI* and *MARIO*.

X.

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